way of delayed landings and off-take, wastage of fuel and risk to passengers etc.?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The radar installed at IGI airport was unserviceable from 0005 hours on 25th January to 1855 hours on 29th January, 1998. This radar of Telefunken make was installed on 19th January, 1973. Since the radar is more than 20 years old, sometimes problems occur in its working. Flights are delayed marginally in the absence of the radar, but safety of aircraft or passenger is not compromised.

Introducing more flights from Hyderabad

2920. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce more flights from Hyderabad to various places in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Hyderabad is, at present, directly connected to Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Calcutta, Nagpur, Bhubaneswar, Vizag and Tirupati by Indian Airlines/Alliance Air/ Jet Airways flights. Additional connections can be considered by the airline operators who are free to operate air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government.

Concession in air Fares to senior Citizens

2921. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines gives concessions in air fare to citizens above 70 years of age;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is proposed to reduce the age to 65 years and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Indian Airlines offers 50% discount to all Senior Citizens who have completed 65 years of age and are residents of India. The discount is available for travel in Economy Class on domestic sectors of the Indian Airlines.

Upgradation of Agartala Airport

2922. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that previous Government had decided to upgrade the Agartala Airport for landing of larger aircraft and also providing night landing facilities;

(b) if so, the progress made in this regard; and

(c) by when Government propose to complete the work of upgradation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Airport Authority of India (AAI) has undertaken expansion and modification of terminal building at Agartala airport at a cost of Rs. 16.24 crores. This work is likely to be completed by December, 1999. Night landing facilities at Agartala airport are already available. AAI also has plans to extend the runway from 6000 ft. to 7500 ft. Land is being acquired by the State Government for this purpose.

Upgradation of Nagpur Airport

2923. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the modernisation and upgradation work of Nagpur Airport in Maharashtra has been completed;

(b) if so, what additional facilities are now available to the air passengers at the airport; and

(c) if not, by when the work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has developed Nagpur airport as model airport for limited international operations. AAI has constructed a New Terminal Building with all modern passenger facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 8.87 crores and commissioned it in April, 1996. This terminal can accommodate 700 passengers. The runway resurfacing has also been completed at a cost of Rs. 4.14 crores.

Closure of Srinagar Airport for upgradation

2924. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sirnagar Airport has been closed for Upgradation; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to solve the difficulties of passengers and tourists arriving from abroad for visit to Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Srinagar airport which belongs to Indian Air Force (IAF) has been temporarily closed for flight operations from 8.6.98 for recarpeting of the runway. Civil flights are being operated from Awantipore Air Force Station. Airports Authority of India and IAF have provided all necessary passenger facilities at Awantipore Air Force Station.

Financial help from European Consortium of Banks for aircraft acquisition

2925. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the sanctions have hit Indian Airlines' plan to raise $100 million from a European Consortium of banks for aircraft acquisition;

(b) what was the estimate of original purchase cost and how much Indian Airlines will have to shell out now for making an initial payment; and

(c) in what manner Indian Airlines propose to raise the required money for buying aircraft indicating budgetary provision made in current year's budget?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Indian Airlines, at present, has no proposal for raising USD 100 million from any European Consortium of Banks for aircraft acquisition.

(b) and (c) Indian Airlines, presently have a proposal to acquire six 50 seater aircraft. The estimated cost for the acquisition of these six 50 seater aircraft is about Rs. 450 cores. Amount to be paid as initial payment will be decided at the time of negotiations.

In the Capital Budget Estimates of the Company for the year 1998-99, an amount of Rs. 35 crores has been provided for making advance payment towards the proposed induction of six 50 seater aircraft. The project for the acquisition of six 50 seater aircraft is proposed to be financed through External Commerical Borrowings.

Renaming the New Cochin Airport

2926. SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation to name the new airport in Cochin (nedumbassrry) after Adi Shankaracharya, whose birth place Kalady is near to the airport; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereon?